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Safer Recruitment Policy

Reviewed on: 28th September 2026

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Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SJA', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of Governors

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Hopper', written over a horizontal line.

Headteacher

Safer Recruitment Policy

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1. Introduction

In accordance with [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#) (2026), para 211

It is vital that as part of their whole school or college approach to safeguarding, governing bodies and proprietors create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in their school or college. As part of this culture, it is important that they adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in schools and colleges.

This sets out the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- Support you to attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Help to deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people
- Support you in identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Local Authority

- Will usually delegate the recruitment of all staff and volunteers to the governing body of the school. However, a representative of the authority may attend proceedings relating to the selection of any teacher, including headteacher, deputy or assistant headteacher. The governing body must consider any advice offered by the representative.

For further information, please refer to

[Staffing and employment: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](#)

2.2 Governing Bodies

- Must ensure the school has effective policies, procedures and resources in place for the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers in accordance with the DfE guidance and legal requirements
- Must monitor compliance within DfE guidance and legal requirements.

2.3 Headteachers

- Must ensure the school operates safer recruitment practices and appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers
- Must ensure that all contractors and agencies used by the school comply with this policy
- Must promote the safeguarding of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process

2.4 Selection Panel

At least one person on any selection panel must have completed accredited safer recruitment training within the last three years.

3. Inviting Applicants

To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts of three months or more to encourage a diverse field of applicants, this normally includes both advertising internally and externally.

Any advertisement will make clear the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and should include the statement below.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (with 2013 and 2020 Amendments). It is also subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and children's barred list check.

The advert should state whether the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (with 2013 and 2020 Amendments) and therefore subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, whether the role is in regulated activity and requires a children's barred list check.

The advert should also include the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and person specification.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the school's data protection policy.

Prospective applicants will usually be supplied with a copy of the following:

- Job description and person specification
- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy
- The school's safer recruitment policy
- An application form (guidance notes for completing application forms may also be included)

Applicants are made aware on the application form that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected. If the applicant has been appointed the offer of employment may be withdrawn or terminated via summary dismissal if the applicant has commenced employment. Where appropriate a referral to the police and/or DBS and/or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) may be made.

4. Application Forms

Where a role involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children, the school or college should include a statement in the application form or within the recruitment documentation provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

All applicants must complete an application in full. CVs will not be accepted. On the application form applicants must provide the following:

- personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number;
- details of the applicant's present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment (a gap is a period of four weeks or more);
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- details of referees/references (see paragraph 5 for further information); and
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

The applicant should sign and date the application form to confirm that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge and belief. If the application form is signed electronically the candidate should be asked to physically sign the form during the interview, if shortlisted.

5. References

Prior to interview, references will be obtained directly from the referees stated where possible. At least two references must be obtained, and they should cover a period of five years prior to the date of application. Obtaining references prior to the interview will allow any discrepancies to be discussed during the selection stage.

References or testimonials provided by the applicant are not acceptable nor are references addressed 'to whom it may concern'.

References should always be from a verifiable source and for applicants who have worked in an education setting, a reference will be required from the current headteacher or principal, even if they were not in post when the applicant worked at that setting.

Where necessary, referees may be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any queries.

A standard reference pro-forma will usually be used which will include asking about:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Any formal capability (currently active on their file) or disciplinary warnings (including any substantiated, safeguarding allegations)
- The candidate's suitability for the post as outlined in the job description.

6. Shortlisting and shortlisted candidates

Shortlisting of candidates and review of completed application forms should happen in a timely manner following the closing date of the job advert.

Completed application forms should be reviewed by at least two people, one of whom will be safer recruitment trained. The job description and person specification of the role will provide the shortlisting criteria for the post.

Once the shortlisting of candidates has been undertaken, an online search of all shortlisted applicants should be carried out, e.g. via a google or social media search. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Further information can be found in Appendix 1.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to participate in the recruitment process. The selection panel will determine what exercises are appropriate to identify the most suitable person for the post(s), this will always include an interview.

When inviting candidates to an interview, they will be asked to complete the criminal records disclosure form and return it to the school prior to the interview. This information should only be requested from shortlisted candidates. It should be made clear to candidates that the school reserves the right to withdraw any invitation to an interview if the candidate fails to return this form as required.

A shortlisted candidate should sign the application form to confirm that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge and belief. If signed electronically the candidate should be asked to physically sign the form at interview.

Applicants will be expected to bring to their interview the following:

- Right to work in the UK; (see section 8.2)
- Proof of identity (see section 8.1); and
- Professional qualifications (see section 8.4).

A photocopy of the above documents will be taken at the interview stage.

7. The interview process

Before the interview, the panel will decide on the selection criteria to evidence the skills required for the post.

If any preparation is required in advance of the interview, the applicant will be advised.

Interviews should be in person, if remotely the applicant should be visible. A minimum of two people but ideally three should be on an interview panel, of which at least one will be safer recruitment trained. The same panel who shortlisted will interview the applicants. This is to ensure consistency throughout the process.

During the interview, the panel will explore with each applicant:

- Reasons for any gaps identified in the application form since leaving school or where the applicant has changed employment or location frequently.

- Any discrepancies between information supplied on the application form and other information available such as references already received and qualifications.
- Any information which is likely to show on a DBS check.
- The reasons for applying for the role and the motives for working with children.
- The ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

The selection panel should ask the applicant for supplementary information to clarify any information from the application, including responses to questions asked during the interview.

The selection panel should also ask the applicant about any relevant information disclosed on the criminal records and self-disclosure form. If an online search has been undertaken, the panel should discuss any relevant information obtained.

Each panel member should keep notes for each applicant. The notes should contain the applicant's name and the name of the panel member making the notes, and the date of the interview.

At the end of the interview process the panel will determine which applicant has been successful. Any offer of employment will be subject to pre-employment checks. If the panel are unable to reach a unanimous decision regarding who to offer the post(s) to, then if there is an odd number on the panel it will be a majority decision; if there is an even number on the panel then the chair of the panel will have the casting vote.

8. Pre- Employment Checks

As outlined above any offer of employment will be subject to pre-employment checks. These include:

- Proof of identity (see section 8.1)
- Proof of eligibility to work in the UK (see section 8.2)
- Satisfactory DBS clearance to be received before they commence employment (see section 8.3)
- Providing original certificates of relevant professional qualifications as required by the school (see section 8.4).
- Satisfactory medical clearance (see section 8.5)
- A childcare disqualification check, where necessary (see section 8.6)
- A clear prohibition from teaching check (for roles involving teaching work only) (see section 8.7)
- Overseas police check if they have lived and worked abroad (see section 8.8)
- Letter(s) of professional standing if they have taught abroad and are being appointed to a role involving teaching work (also see section 8.8).

8.1. Proof of identity

All applicants will be required to bring in documentation which establishes the proof of their Identity as outlined [here](#). It is best practice that this includes seeing a copy of the original birth certificate.

8.2. Proof of eligibility to work in the UK

The successful applicant will have to demonstrate they are eligible to work in the UK as outlined [here](#).

8.3. DBS Certificates

Prior to commencing work, a satisfactory DBS clearance should be obtained. The successful applicant will be required to complete a DBS application or provide the necessary information to enable their details to be checked using the DBS portable service.

The latest guidance on identity checking for DBS's can be found here: [ID checking guidelines for Standard/Enhanced DBS check applications from 22 April 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

All successful candidates are required to bring in their original DBS certificate to the school or college so the information on this can be verified against the information already on file. If the post involves working in regulated activity a separate check of the Children's Barred List will also be made.

If any information is disclosed on the DBS certificate, then a risk assessment must be completed by the school to determine whether it is still appropriate to continue with the appointment. This risk assessment will usually be completed by two people, one of whom will be the headteacher. The named safeguarding governor or another member of the leadership team may also assist with the completion of this risk assessment. A copy of the risk assessment will be retained on the personnel file.

To help schools and colleges comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, when the school chooses to retain a copy of the DBS certificate, there should be a valid reason for doing so and it should not be kept for longer than six months. When the information is destroyed the school must keep a record of the fact that checks were carried out, the result and the recruitment decision taken.

8.4. Professional Qualifications

The selection panel will determine what qualifications are deemed relevant for each post and the successful candidate is required to provide proof of their qualifications prior to commencing employment.

8.5. Satisfactory medical clearance

All successful candidates will be asked to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire which will be reviewed by the occupational health provider. It may be necessary for the successful candidate to attend a consultation with an occupational health advisor or consultant and/or a medical report may also be required. It will be for occupational health provider to determine what additional information is required. The cost of any occupational health checks will be paid by the school.

8.6. Childcare Disqualification Checks

In accordance with the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Childcare Act 2006, a childcare disqualification check will be required if the post:

- Involves working with children up to and including the school year in which they will have their fifth birthday. This typically includes those working with nursery and reception aged children, along with those working in breakfast and afterschool clubs and providing lunch time supervision for children in this age group.
- Involves providing later years provision to children up to and including the school year in which they will reach their eighth birthday, for example breakfast clubs and afterschool clubs.
- Anyone involved in the management of the above two groups of staff.

If a positive disclosure is made the appointee will be required to apply and obtain a waiver from Ofsted before they will be able to commence employment.

8.7. Prohibition Order checks

A prohibition order check is required for anyone appointed to a teaching position or support staff role which involves planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of when not being supervised by a qualified teacher. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to undertake teaching work or work as a teacher.

Prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). An interim prohibition order may be issued if it is considered in the public interest to do so.

8.8. Overseas Police Checks and Letters of Professional Standing

In addition to the pre-employment checks, if the successful candidate has lived and/or worked outside of the UK for more than 3 months in the last 10 years further checks should be made. This includes the successful candidate obtaining an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK.

The school need to be satisfied that they have undertaken all reasonable checks to ensure safer recruitment processes has been completed. This may include obtaining any further information about matters that occurred outside of the UK.

All schools and colleges should apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

These checks could include, where available:

- Criminal records checks for overseas applicants - Home Office guidance can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk); and for all positions.
- The successful candidate should obtain a letter from the professional regulatory authority in the country, or countries in which they resided/worked, confirming they have not been given any sanctions or restrictions, and/or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to work with children.

Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the [Regulated Professions database](#). Successful candidates can also find more information on the government website [Check which professions are regulated in the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

All evidence will be considered together with information obtained through other pre-appointment checks to help assess their suitability. Any costs incurred in obtaining additional checks will be met by the successful candidate and will not be reimbursed by the school.

If this information is not available, schools should seek alternative methods of checking suitability and/or undertake a risk assessment which evidences how the school has tried to obtain this information which supports their decision-making process on whether to proceed with the appointment. For further information refer to statutory guidance.

9. Existing Staff

In certain circumstances the school will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

10. Checks on other Adults in positions of trust

10.1. Agency and third-party staff

The school must obtain written notification from any agency, or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks, as required by the statutory regulations, that would otherwise have been undertaken by the school. The school will also check the agency worker is the same person for who the checks have been made, and the agency worker will be expected to provide photo ID on their first day.

The agency worker is required to bring in the original DBS certificate either prior to starting or on the first day of an assignment. A DBS certificate should be provided by the agency or third-party organisation. Depending on the information disclosed, a risk assessment may need to be undertaken.

10.2. Contractors

A letter of assurance is required from any external third-party contractor or provider regarding confirmation of the pre-employment checks undertaken on their employees who attend the school site. This needs to be provided prior to, or on arrival at the school and held on file for the duration of the contract.

The school should ensure that any contractor or any employee of the contractor who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

The school will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors, and the contractor will be expected to reimburse the school for any cost incurred when doing this.

Contractors who have not had the relevant checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

The school will check the identity of all contractors and their staff by photo ID each time they arrive at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, working with children, as covered in paragraph 8.6, the school will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Childcare Act 2006.

Where the school decides that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and does not carry out such checks, they will retain a record of the risk assessment. This will include advice received, the school's evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place.

10.3. Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by the school, the school will ensure that all pre-employment checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, the school will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

If the role involves working with pupils, as described in paragraph 8.6, whether the trainee is salaried by the school or fee-funded, checks will include ensuring that the individual is not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Childcare Act 2006.

10.4. Volunteers

The school will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Carry out an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for any volunteers. Guidance for schools, colleges and childcare settings to understand what they need to do to comply with the change to regulated activity that will come into force on 1 September 2026. This is due to changes made by the [Crime and Policing Act 2026](#).

The Act changes the definition of regulated activity by removing the supervision exemption. Under that exemption, **unpaid activities** such as teaching, training, instructing, or caring for or supervising children were not classed as regulated activity if supervised by someone who was in regulated activity (for example, a class teacher).

This means that all such activity is now considered to be regulated activity if it is carried out frequently, or if it meets the period condition. The period condition means:

- on more than 3 days in a 30-day period
- overnight

All volunteers engaging in regulated activity will need to have an enhanced [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#) check with children's barred list information.

- Determine whether to ask the volunteer to complete an application form, attend an interview (which will include exploring their reasons for volunteering to work with children and their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people) and whether to take up references.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.

Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Childcare Act 2006, if undertaking work as outlined in paragraph 8.6. Where the school decides that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and they do not carry out such checks, they will undertake and retain a risk assessment. The risk assessment will include the evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

10.5. Additional check for governors

In addition to the checks above outlined for volunteers, all governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

The Local Authority will confirm to the school confirmation that an application form and references have been obtained for anyone appointed as a community governor, as well as other relevant checks.

10.6 Pupils placed in alternative provision settings

Where the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school will obtain a letter of assurance from the provider to show they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there.

10.7 Adults who supervise pupils on work experience (KS3- KS5 schools only)

When organising work experience, the school will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

The school will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

10.8 Pupils staying with host families

Where the school arrange for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), the school will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information.

Where the school is organising hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, the school will work with its partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

11. Single Central Record

All schools must maintain a record of pre-employment checks referred to in the School Staffing Regulations as the register and more commonly known as the single central record or SCR.

As a minimum all staff including trainees, agency and third-party staff must be included on the single central record – even if they work for one day

The single central record must show whether the following checks have been undertaken:

- An identity check, (identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website);
- A barred list check;
- An enhanced DBS check requested/certificate provided; a prohibition from teaching check;
- Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK;

- A check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom

It is usual that checks undertaken on volunteers, governors and regular visitors are also recorded on the single central record.

12. Induction and probation

12.1 New support staff employees

New employees without any continuous service will be subject to a probationary period as outlined in the school's probationary procedure. There will also be an induction which includes ensuring that the employee is fully aware of, and should follow the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.

The induction and probation procedure should assess whether the new employee is demonstrating safe behaviour, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and can identify causes of concern, know when to report them and to whom. If there are any concerns about their ability to follow safeguarding policies and procedures, the school must ensure the probationary policy is correctly applied and/or contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if necessary.

12.2 Staff with continuous service

For staff with continuous service, the school will ensure there is an induction which includes ensuring the employee is fully aware of the need to follow the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.

12.3 Volunteers

There will be a settling-in period for volunteers, this will include a local safeguarding induction. If the settling-in period reveals that the volunteer is not suited to a particular role, or there are any emerging safeguarding concerns, the volunteer can be asked to leave and stand down at any point.

12.4 Governors

If there are any emerging safeguarding concerns about a volunteer who is a governor, advice must be sought from an appropriate officer from the Local Authority.

13. External Referrals

13.1 Referral to the DBS

The school is legally obliged to make a referral to the DBS where they remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left), and they believe the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults,
- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults; or

- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations).

13.2 Referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

The school must refer the employee to the TRA in accordance with statutory guidance if there is a substantiated safeguarding allegation against someone undertaking teaching work or a volunteer who is a qualified teacher.

Appendix 1

LA Guidance on Online Searches of Shortlisted Candidates

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 says at paragraph 225 ‘as part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Schools and colleges should inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.’

Schools should consider their obligations carefully under this paragraph. As this is statutory guidance, the advice is the checks should be undertaken unless there is a very good reason not to.

The requirement is only to undertake searches for shortlisted candidates - it is not necessary to do it for all applicants.

There is no statutory guidance as to what format the checks should take, many settings are choosing to simply put the shortlisted candidate's name in the search bar when doing a general internet search. Adding "media" "crown court" "magistrates court" "convicted" after a candidate's name may provide relevant information. The purpose is to help identify any issues or incidents which would either harm the reputation of the school or make the candidate unsuitable to work with children.

Schools should also be mindful that there are some names which are more usual than others, and so must ensure they are looking at the correct person online.

The guidance states "*might want to explore with the applicant at interview*". It is possible to determine that the content is so serious that you opt to bring the recruitment process to an end. If you continue, you put the content to them at interview in the same way you would any issues in a reference or adverse information on a DBS check.

When undertaking recruitment, it is important to ensure a fair and equitable process is followed for all candidates, therefore online searches should not be carried out by those who are on the interview panel due to issues of equality e.g. information on a candidate's ethnicity or sexuality may be found. If schools find information on one shortlisted candidate but not on the others, careful consideration should be given what to do with this, including whether it is relevant to the post they are applying for. Advice from your HR provider should be sought.

Summary of changes to the policy

Document control			
Date	Section(s)	Update(s)	Notes
September 2026	Whole document	KCSIE updated to 2026, paragraph numbers, quotes and links checked and updated where needed.	
March 2026	8.3	Link to DBS ID checking government guidance added	